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PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION REPORT



COMMUNIST INSURGENCY IN EASTERN CAMBODIA

NPIC/R-114/68 OCTOBER 1968

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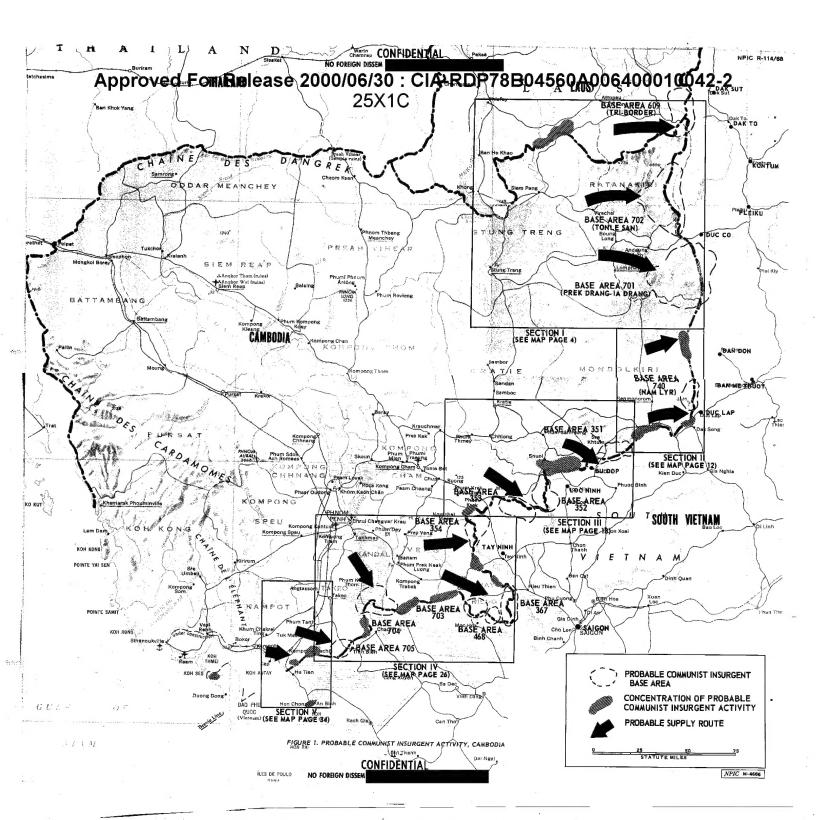
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PREFACE

This report provides photographic documentation of activity believed to be that of Communist insurgents along the eastern Cambodian border between January 1967 and August 1968. It updates NPIC/R-30/67, Southeast Asia Activity Report, Compendium 36, Insurgency in Cambodia. The report contains the following five sections, proceeding generally north-south along the eastern Cambodian border (Figure 1, page ii):

Section I: Tonle Kong and Tonle San (rivers) Waterborne Supply Routes, and Base Areas 609, 701, and 702.*

Section II: Base Area 704 and the Mereuch Supply Route.

Section III: Base Areas 351, 352, and 353.

Section IV: Base Areas 354, 367, 468, 703, 704, and 705.

Section V: Waterborne Supply Routes, Kampot Province and Gulf of Thailand. Each section contains a large-scale map depicting the cumulative intelligence available from photography on the activity in each area. The text supplements this material by emphasizing items of particular significance, while the photographs provide examples of various types of activity.

*Base areas have been numerically designated by the US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV).

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SUMMARY

There has been a significant increase in the utilization of Cambodian territory by Communist insurgent forces since early 1967. While most of the activity remains concentrated along the Cambodia-South Vietnam border, the greatly expanded logistics network and the variety of identified facilities indicate that Cambodia has now become a source of more direct support. An increase in aerial reconnaissance missions and the refinement of interpretation techniques have contributed to the identification of numerous new areas of insurgency during this period, bringing the total from 200 to almost 700. Of more significance, however, has been the increase in activity in the previously identified insur-

Approximately 210 nautical miles (nm) of roads have been recently constructed within the areas of probable Communist insurgent control, a 300 percent increase in roads since 1966. In addition to numerous new motorable border crossings, most of this construction is directly linked with the previously existing Cambodian road network.

Motorized river craft sightings on the Tonle Kong and Tonle San (rivers) increased 75 to 100 percent during Although there was extensive use of other waterways, the traffic on these two rivers is indicative of the levels of insurgent activity, due to the lack of indigenous activity in these relatively isolated areas.

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Stockpiled supplies, including numerous caches of rice and large quantities of crated supplies, have been detected in open storage along several of the recently constructed 25X1B border roads. Although it is difficult to determine from photography what specific type of

Similar depots of this type have been discovered in Laos and South Vietnam by allied ground sweeps and friendly patrols. At least six of these new open storage areas have been detected on photography. They are located north of Snoul, near a Cambodian storage depot north of Kampot, immediately south of Kratie, along a recently constructed road near the Tonle San (river), adjacent to a newly constructed road extending to the South Vietnam border east of Lomphat, and in Base Area 351 (northeast of Budop, South Vietnam).

The expansion of Communist insurgent areas during 1967 and 1968 was characterized by an increasing emphasis on storage and support facilities. Bunkered storage areas (possibly for munitions), extensive open storage for rice, and assault training facilities resembling South Vietnamese military fortifications were identified for the first time.

The greatest increase in facilities was reflected in the "Parrot's Beak" area of Svay Rieng Province, 25 nm west of Saigon, where approximately 150 buildings associated with Communist insurgent activity in 1966 had been expanded to more than 1,100 buildings by At present, hundreds of defensive positions are located within this tri-base complex.

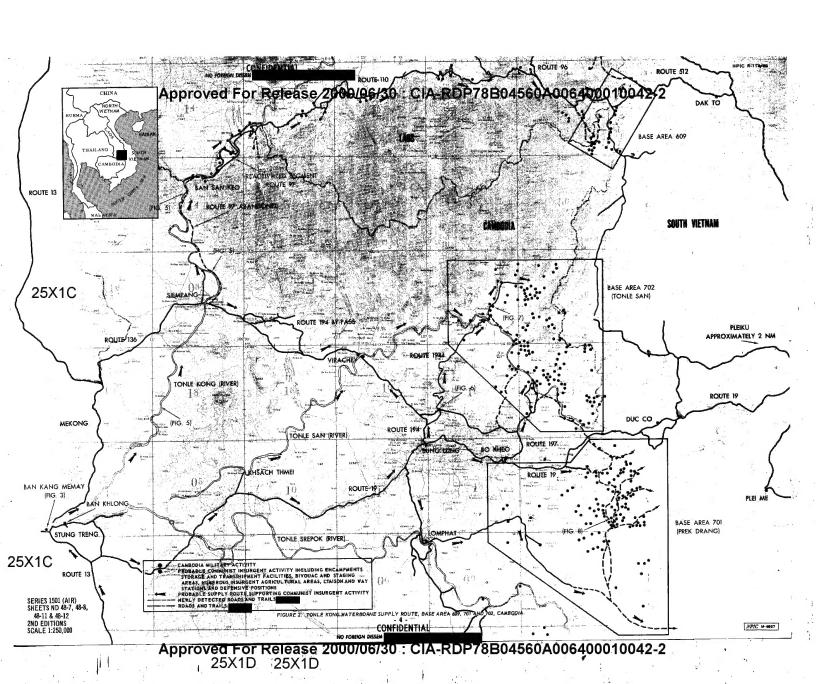
In southeastern Cambodia during photography revealed a road and waterborne logistics route between Ton Hon and Sroc Chuch, Cambodia, and the Vinh Te Canal in nearby South Vietnam. The east-west oriented canal forms the final link in what is apparently the most active supply artery between southern Cambodia and the Communist insurgent forces operating in the Mekong Delta of South Vietnam.

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SECTION I



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SECTION I

Tonle Kong Waterborne Supply Route 25X1D 25X1D 25X1D

The Tonle Kong continues to be a vital link in the Communist supply route between Cambodia and South Vietnam (Figure 2). Analysis of more than 300 photographic missions between and reveals a steady increase in the number of motorized craft utilizing the river between Stung Treng, Cambodia, and the Communist road network inside southern Laos. Recorded observations in for example, revealed a single-day high of 127 craft, as compared to a single-day count of 61 craft in The overall increase in waterborne logistics activity since is approximately 75 percent. 25X1D

At present, motorized river craft (Figure 4) traveling between the storage and transshipment facilities at both Ban Kan Memay (Figure 3) and Ban Khlong near Stung Treng and Siempang utilize the main channel and travel in convoys of eight to 16 at approximately four mph (Figure 5, left photo). After passing Siempang, the craft move in groups of two, three, or four. Many are camouflaged and all travel as close to the river bank as the prevailing water depth will allow (Figure 5, center and right photos). When the craft approach the Laos border, small pirogues escort the craft to one of six transshipment areas along the east (Cambodia) bank of the river, adjacent to the reactivated segment of Route 97.

Additional facilities in direct support of the waterborne activity include ll river insurgent security posts dispersed along the west (Laos) side of the river and four probable truck parks and three probable storage areas located along the service roads between Route 97 and the transshipment points.

Laos Route 110, which extends east from Route 97 in Cambodia, was open throughout with the exception of approximately four to six weeks during the peak monsoon season. This is in contrast to the major north-south routes in Laos (Routes 92 and 96), which were closed during the monsoon season for approximately four months in each year. In Route 110 was extended east into the Cambodia tri-border area, with one branch continuing northeast to a junction with South Vietnam Route

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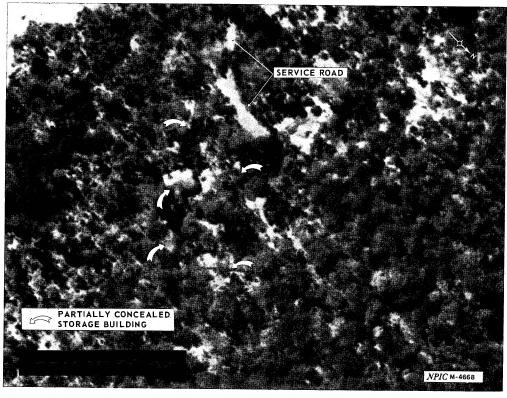


FIGURE 3. RECENTLY CONSTRUCTED STORAGE AREA WITH MOTORABLE ACCESS TO THE MEKONG RIVER, BAN KANG MEMAY, CAMBODIA.

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512. The other branch continues south inside Cambodia for approximately 10 nm, crosses the border into South Vietnam, and continues south to the vicinity of an abandoned allied artillery base.

Base Area 609

The tri-border Base Area 609 was first identified on photography in and has probably served as a redistribution point for personnel and supplies into South Vietnam since that time. With the extension of the motorable network directly into South Vietnam, however, the need for such facilities in this location has probably decreased. Although new truck parks have been identified, there is some photographic evidence that the storage and bivouac functions have been at least partly transferred to adjacent areas in South Vietnam.

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Base Areas 701 and 702

The contiguous Base Areas 70l and 702 extend approximately 55 nm along the Cambodia/South Vietnam border and into Cambodia to an approximate depth of 20 nm. As of approximately 253 areas of probable insurgent activity had been identified, including: open rice storage facilities; storage buildings; bivouac and staging facilities; truck parks and transshipment points; liaison or way stations; a rocket or mortar training area; extensive non-indigenous agriculture; and numerous foxholes, trenches, and automatic weapons positions. Approximately 40 percent of the areas previously identified in Base Area 701 which include these activities, and 80 percent of those in Base Area 702, remain active.

Motorable roads have been recently constructed into both base areas. A new 22-nm road (designated Route 1944) extends northeast from Route 194, across the Tonle San and into the northern sector of Base Area 702. Since this road has been heavily used by trucks and four motorized river craft have been observed ferrying supplies at the river crossing. Heavy track activity was detected on Route 1944 north of the Tonle San in suggesting the presence of tracked vehicles. Figures 6 and 7 show the extensive development of support and storage areas in the border region.

During a newly constructed road was observed between Lomphat and Base Area 70l. The road extends approximately 30 nm through a suspect Communist insurgent support area at Kamong Chong, continuing past a Cambodian military camp, and terminating at the Prek Drang (stream). There has been increasing vehicular use of the road since and since heavily used trails have been observed extending from its terminus east into South Vietnam and north to a probable Communist insurgent base camp (Figure 8).

Recorded observations of motorized river craft on the Tonle San between Virachey and the transshipment points in Base Area 702 increased from a single-day high of 18 to 36 craft observed in Craft were also observed transporting supplies from as far down river as Khsach Thmei, approximately 25 nm southwest of Virachey. Between the river traffic declined by at least 50 percent. This rapid decline during the peak shipping season is possibly explained by the completion of Route 1944 into the area.

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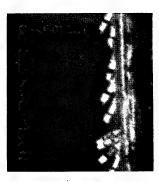
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GROUND PHOTO



TYPE A MOTORIZED RIVER CRAFT CAPACITY: 1.5 TO 2 METRIC TONS SPECIFICATIONS: 20 TO 25 FEET L.O.A APPROXIMATE NUMBER IN SERVICE: 74* TOTAL FLEET TONNAGE: 148(MT) PROBABLY CAMBODIAN





TYPE B MOTORIZED RIVER CRAFT
CAPACITY: 2.5 TO 3 METRIC TONS
SPECIFICATIONS: 25 TO 35 FEET L.O.A
APPROXIMATE NUMBER IN SERVICE: 47*
TOTAL FLEET TONNAGE: 141(MT)
PROBABLY CAMBODIAN



NO GROUND PHOTO AVAILABLE

TYPE C MOTORIZED RIVER CRAFT CAPACITY: 3.5 TO 5 METRIC TONS SPECIFICATIONS: 35 TO 45 FEET L.O.A. APPROXIMATE NUMBER IN SERVICE: 16*TOTAL FLEET TONNAGE: 80(MT) PROBABLY CAMBODIAN





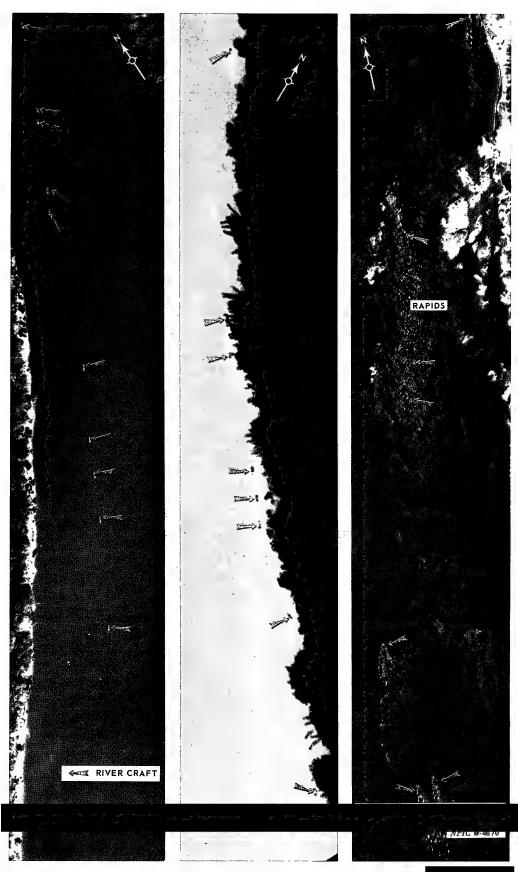
TYPE D MOTORIZED PIROGUE
CAPACITY: 1 TO 1.5 METRIC TONS
SPECIFICATIONS: 15 TO 25 FEET L.O.A.
APPROXIMATE NUMBER IN SERVICE: 27*
TOTAL FLEET TONNAGE:
NOT INCLUDED "
PROBABLY COMMUNIST INSURGENT

*MAXIMUM NUMBER OBSERVED ON ONE PHOTOGRAPHIC MISSION.

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FIGURE 4. TONLE KONG RIVER CRAFT BY TYPE AND TOTAL CAPACITY.

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FIGURE 5. CONVOYS OF MOTORIZED RIVER CRAFT HEADING UPSTREAM ON THE TONLE KONG.

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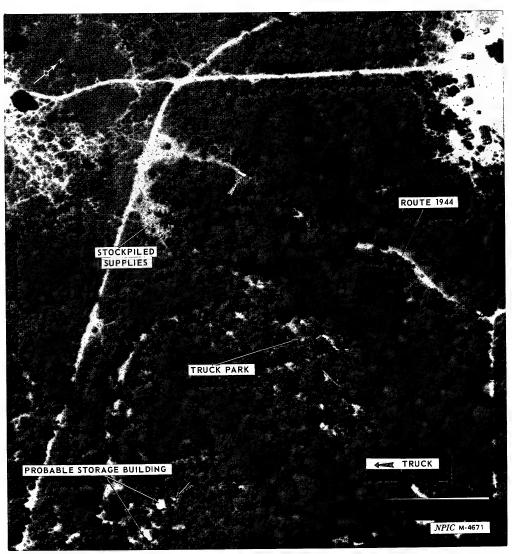
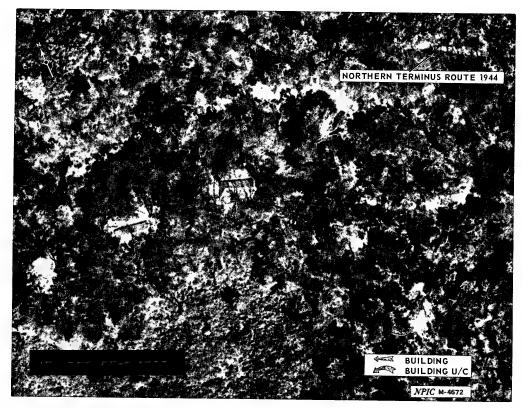


FIGURE 6. PROBABLE TRUCK PARK AND STORAGE AREA, RATANAKIRI PROVINCE, CAMBODIA. The probable storage buildings were constructed in

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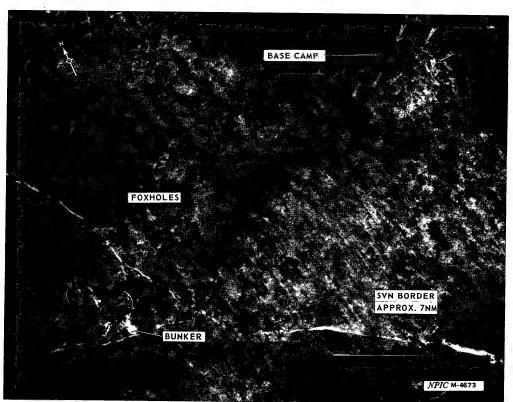
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FIGURE 7. PROBABLE COMMUNIST INSURGENT ENCAMPMENT, BASE AREA 702 (TONLE SAM), CAMBODIA. The camp is possibly used as a headquarters and support area.



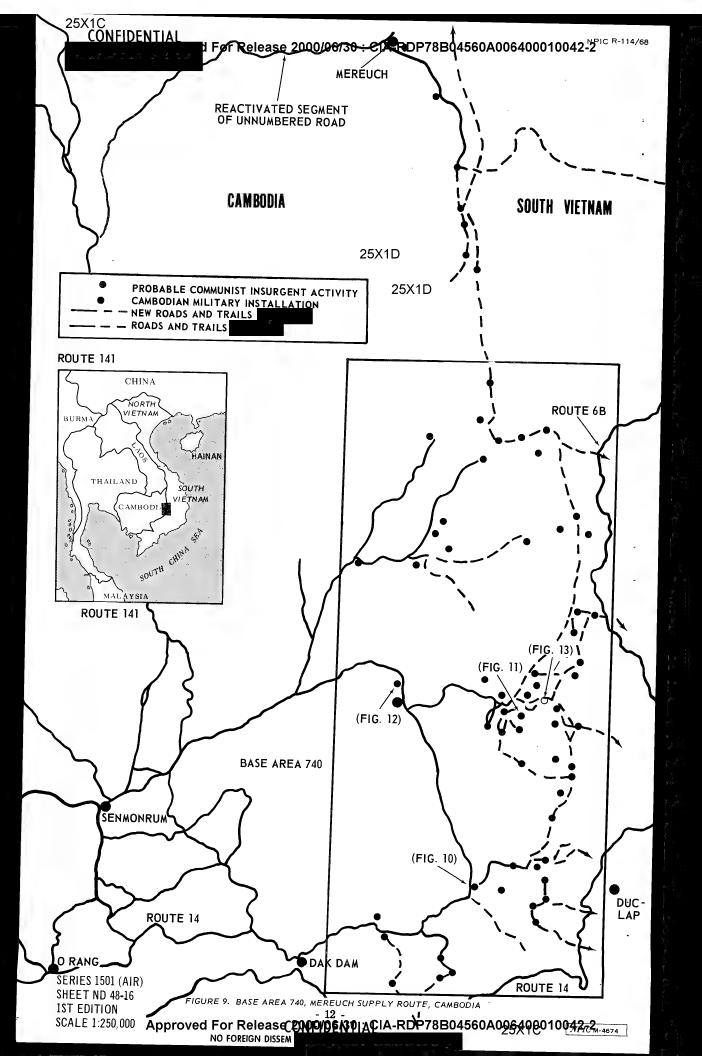
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FIGURE 8. PROBABLE COMMUNIST INSURGENT BASE CAMP AND ASSOCIATED DEFENSES, BASE AREA 701 (PREK DRANG), CAMBODIA. The heavily used trails in the area continue east into South Vietnam.

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SECTION II



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SECTION II

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Throughout and the first eight months of there was considerable evidence of increased logistics support in southeastern Mondulkiri Province, particularly in Base Area 740 (Figures 9-12), and in the vicinity of Mereuch.

Approximately 60 areas of probable Communist insurgent activity, including base camps and storage areas, have been identified within Base Area 740. A major portion of the activity is concentrated near the eastern terminus of a road system constructed be-The unnumbered road (Figure 13) has been extended to within 2.5 nm of the South Vietnam border, where it terminates in a vehicle turnaround. Heavily used trails continue east, cross the South Vietnam border, and intersect Routes 6B and 14.

Although the Cambodian strongpoint at Mereuch has remained active during the past four years, the service road which connects it to Route 141 was abandoned in early major portions of this service road were reactivated and subsequently revealed signs of heavy vehicular use.

A new road was observed extending south from Mereuch in paralleling the Tonle Srepok (river), and terminating in a transshipment area 1.8 nm west of the border. From this point, trails extend east into South Vietnam and south into Base Area 740.

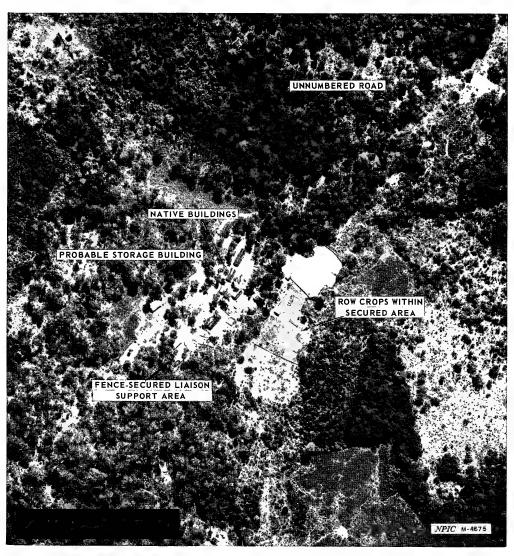


FIGURE 10. PROBABLE COMMUNIST INSURGENT LIAISON AND SUPPORT AREA, SOUTHEASTERN MONDULKIRI PROVINCE, CAMBODIA.

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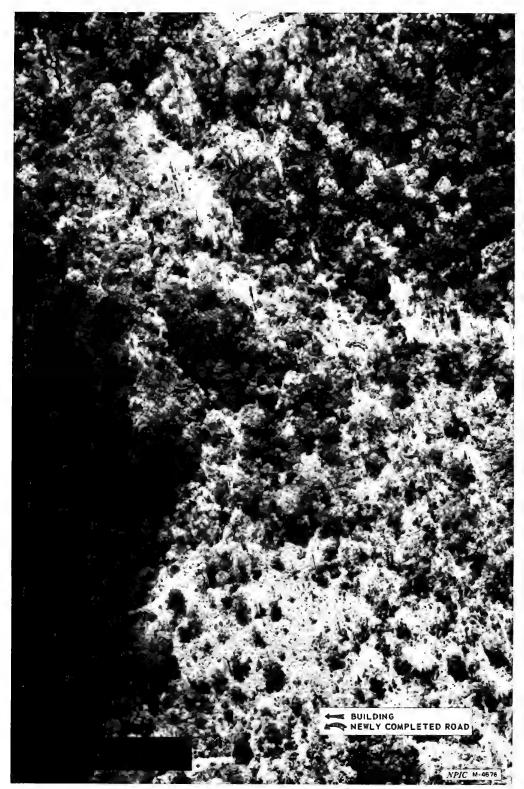


FIGURE 11. PROBABLE INSURGENT ENCAMPMENT AT THE BASE OF NAM LYR MOUNTAIN, BASE AREA 740, CAMBODIA.

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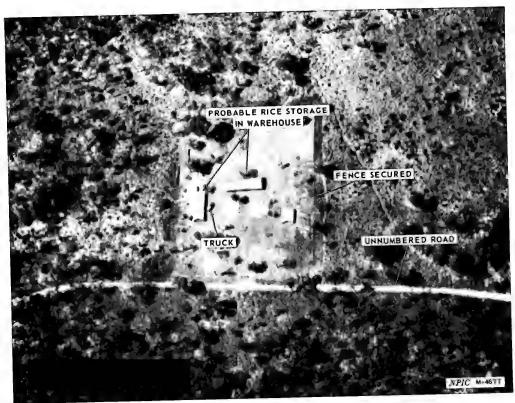


FIGURE 12. PROBABLE CAMBODIAN RICE STORAGE AREA, SOUTHEASTERN MONDULKIRI PROVINCE, CAMBODIA.

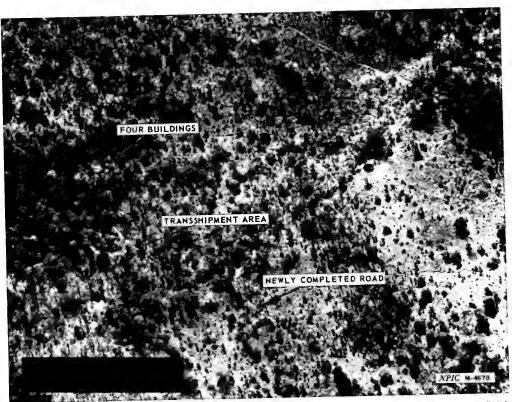


FIGURE 13. NEWLY COMPLETED ROAD SEGMENT AND TRANSSHIPMENT AREA, BASE AREA 740 (NAM LYR MOUNTAIN), CAMBODIA. This vehicle turnaround is 2.5 nm from the South Vietnam border.

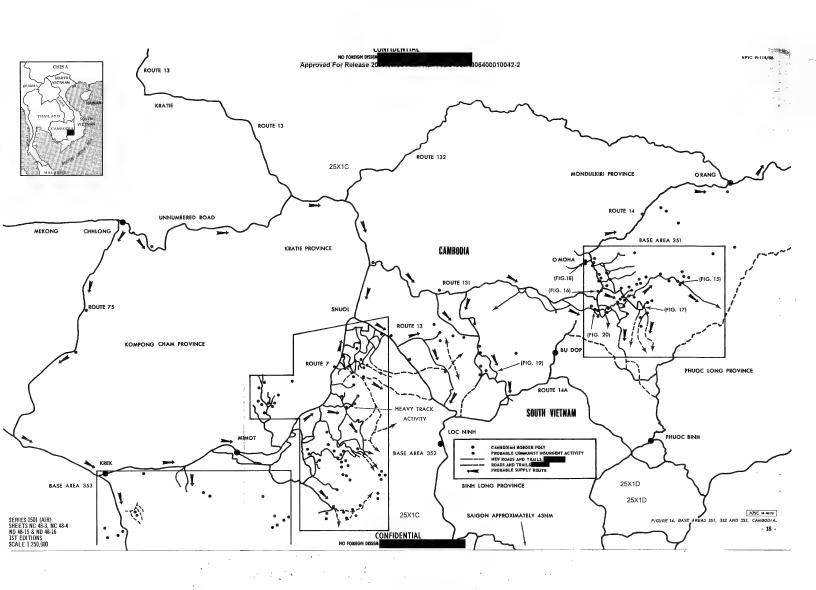
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SECTION III



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Between Base Areas 351 and 352, two new major motorable roads cross into South Vietnam. One by-passes a Cambodian border post southeast of Snuol, crosses into Binh Long Province and connects with Route 13 approximately 4 nm north of the provincial capital, Loc Ninh. The second road (Figure 19) is 12 nm long and forms an important link between Cambodian Route 131 and South Vietnam Route 14A. It was apparently built in less than two months. Figure 20 is a classic example of the close proximity between a probable Communist insurgent facility, an occupied Cambodian border post, and an open storage area containing hundreds of sacks of rice. The rice, stockpiled less than 200 yards from the border post and 1,100 yards from a liaison or way station, is excessive for the small outpost.

Base Area 352 extends south from the Snuol plantation area in Cambodia to the north-eastern quadrant of War Zone "C". The bulk of the probable Communist insurgent activity is concentrated along a 20-nm segment of the Cambodia-South Vietnam border, which has a north-south orientation in this area. Cambodian Routes 7 and 13 are the major vehicular arteries from which 11 unnumbered roads provide access to several of the insurgent facilities detected along the border. Between the original 14 facilities expanded to approximately 40, including rocket or mortar positions and associated defense positions. Photography also revealed heavy track activity with associated spoil, suggesting the presence of tracked vehicles within Base Area 352.

At least 95 percent of Base Area 353 is in South Vietnam with the remainder in the border section of southern Kompong Cham province. Several motorable border crossings, associated trails, and temporary bivouac areas are the only significant items observed on photography during 25X1D 25X1D

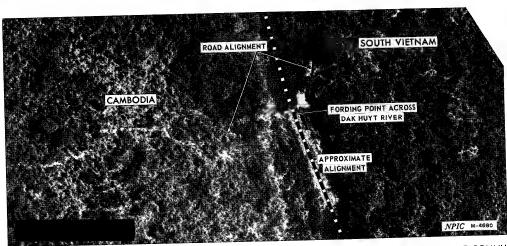


FIGURE 15. RECENTLY DETECTED ROAD SEGMENT WHICH JOINS CAMBODIA ROUTES 14 AND 131 WITH THE COMMUNIST INSURGENT LOGISTICS NET IN PHUC LONG PROVINCE, SOUTH VIETNAM.

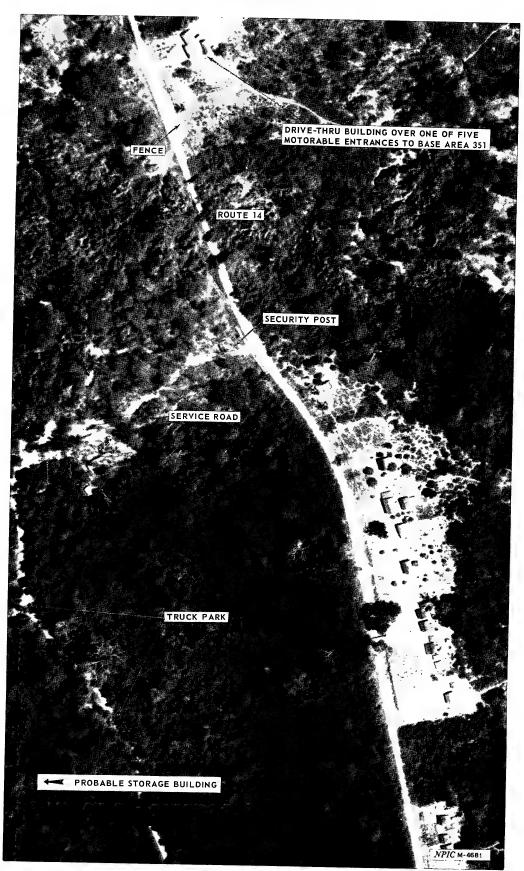
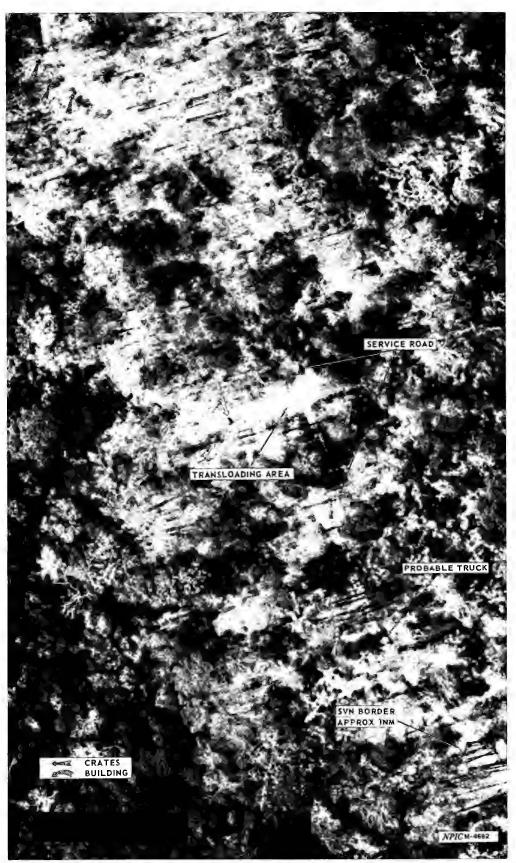


FIGURE 16. PROBABLE TRUCK PARK AND STORAGE AREA, ROUTE 14, BASE AREA 351, CAMBODIA.

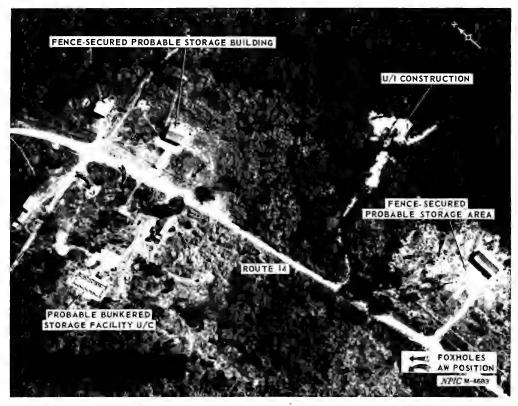


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FIGURE 17. PROBABLE OPEN STORAGE AND TRANSLOADING AREA, BASE AREA 351, CAMBODIA,

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FIGURE 18. HEAVILY DEFENDED PROBABLE STORAGE AREA, BASE AREA 351, CAMBODIA.

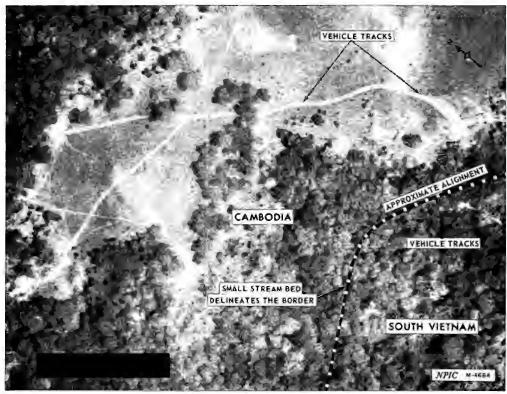


FIGURE 19. NEW UNNUMBERED ROAD EXTENDING FROM CAMBODIA ROUTE 131 TO SOUTH VIETNAM ROUTE 14A IN NEARBY BINH LONG PROVINCE

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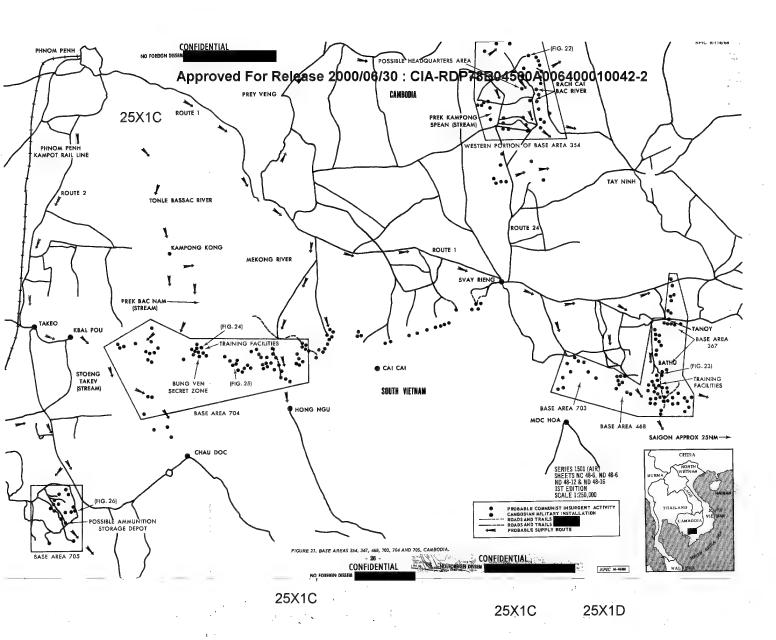


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SECTION IV

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Base Area 354

Approximately 35 areas of probable Communist insurgent activity have been observed within the western (Cambodian) portion of Base Area 354 (Figure 21). The activity is generally concentrated along the Rach Cai Bac (stream), which forms the Cambodia-South Vietnam border in this area (Figure 22), and the connecting Prek Kompong Spean (river) which extends west into Cambodia, perpendicular to the border.

River traffic along this probable waterborne supply network increased significantly during the latter part of Many of the craft had canvascovered cargo and appeared to originate from one of the eight transshipment points identified along the Prek Kompong Spean.

In addition to the transshipment points, storage areas, and truck parks associated with the waterborne activity, a possible Communist insurgent headquarters area has been located approximately 2.5 nm west of the border. Numerous buildings, partly concealed by a heavy tree canopy, are interconnected by a maze of trails and cart tracks. The heavily defended area is partially surrounded by log and earthern barricades, with a series of probable security posts along the adjacent segment of the Rac Cai Bac.

Base Areas 367, 468, and 703

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These base areas are located in the "Parrot's Beak" sector of southeastern Svay Rieng Province, 25 nm west of Saigon. Hundreds of defense positions, bunkered storage facilities, and training areas were identified within this tri-base complex during (Figure 23). The area now contains approximately 1,100 buildings associated with the probable Communist insurgent activity, as compared to approximately 150 in The area is believed to be used by the Communists as a major springboard for attacks launched against Saigon.

Base Area 704

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This base area is located along the Cambodia-South Vietnam border in the vicinity of the Mekong and Bassac Rivers. While long associated with waterborne insurgent activity, it

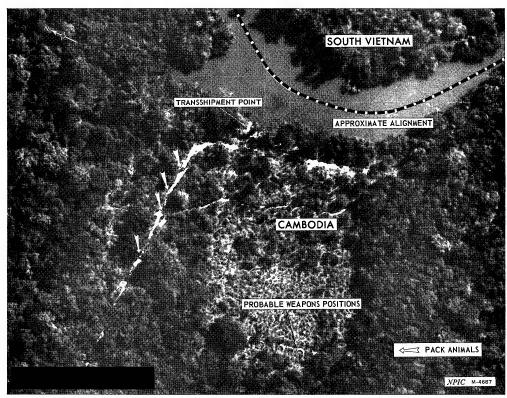


FIGURE 22. TRANSSHIPMENT POINT, BASE AREA 354, CAMBODIA-SOUTH VIETNAM BORDER. Pack animals are probably carrying supplies to the border.

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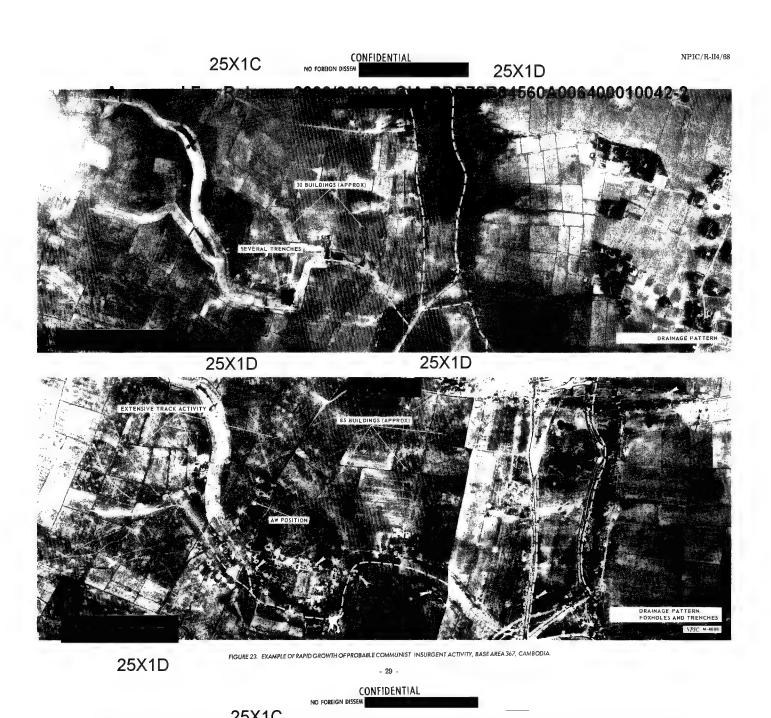
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appeared to be used primarily for the training and temporary encampment of large numbers of Communist personnel during 25X1D 25X1D Between numerous defense positions, encampments, and storage buildings were constructed along the Prek Bac Nam (stream) in the "Bung Ven Secret Zone." Elaborate training sites, built to simulate South Vietnamese fortifications, were subsequently identified in the area during (Figure 24). By late these sites had been abandoned and extensive newly established bivouac areas (Figure 25) and fortifications had been identified in the vicinity of Hong Ngu and Chau Doc, South
Vietnam. The amount of suspect waterborne activity in the area continued to increase during
particularly on the Prek Bac Nam between Kampong Kong and four transshipment points near the border. An even greater increase was observed on the Stoeng Takev (stream) which extends from Takeo into the southeast corner of the base area. A maximum single-day total of 18 craft was sighted on the Stoeng Takev between the village of Kbal Pou and the border during
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Located in the vicinity of Bachieu Mountain, this base area is believed to consist mostly of open and sheltered storage facilities. The heavy tree canopy and rocky terrain preclude an accurate estimate of the current level of Communist insurgent activity; however, 15 suspect areas have been identified within a 25-sq-nm area. Of particular significance are the large numbers of rice sacks dispersed within some of the areas (Figure 26). Comparative photography during revealed the location of a possible ammunition storage depot within a secured area in the village of Neasakiri, where one storage-type building was dismantled and two possible storage bunkers were constructed. The land-scaping at this facility is unusual for a Cambodian military installation. The use of a star configuration directly in front of the administration building has not been observed at any of the more than 300 Cambodian installations identified throughout the country. Defenses were constructed prior to

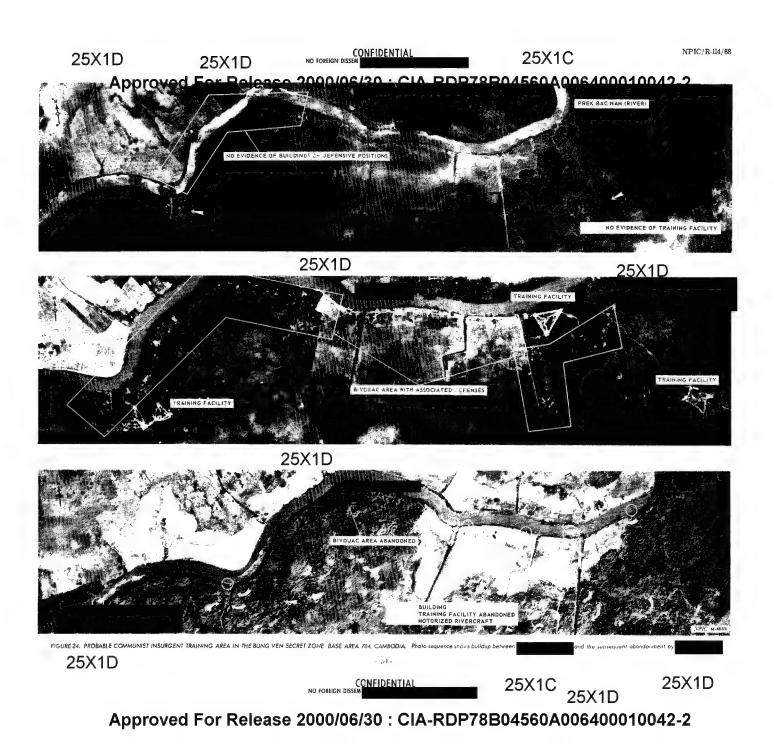
vehicle or cart tracks and a well-used trail extend south from this area into neaby South

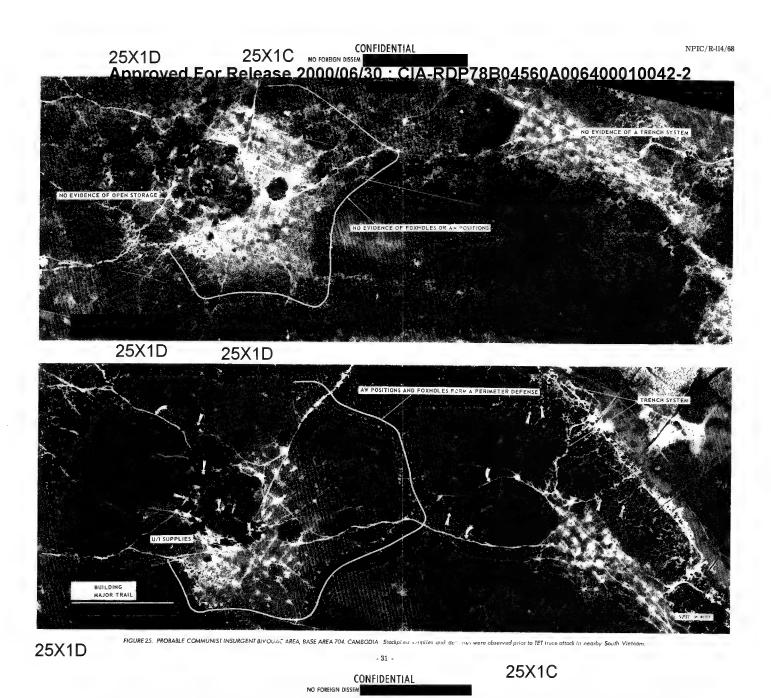
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Vietnam.

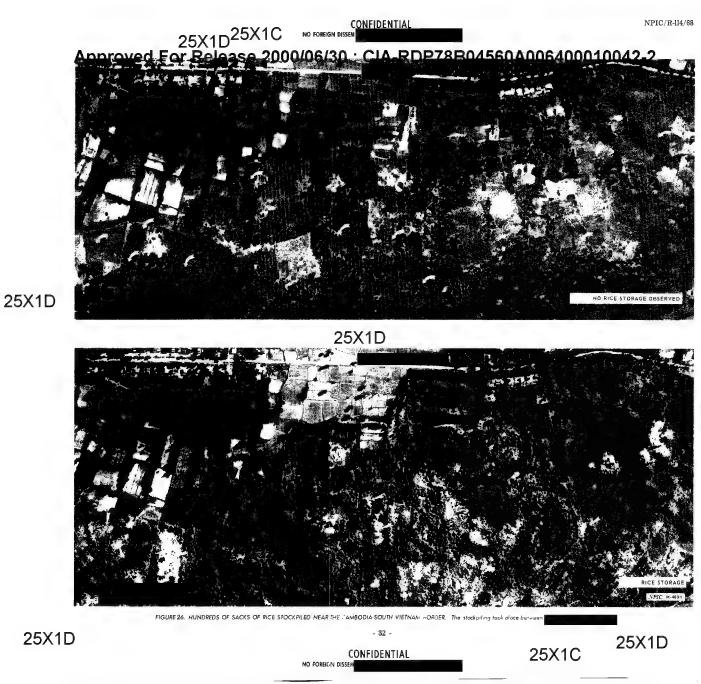


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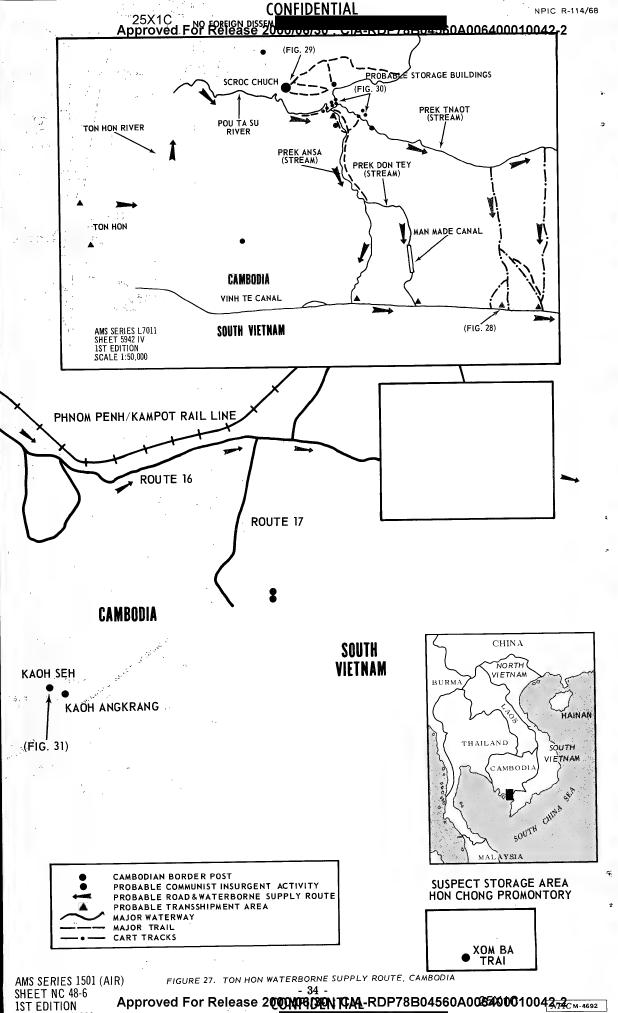


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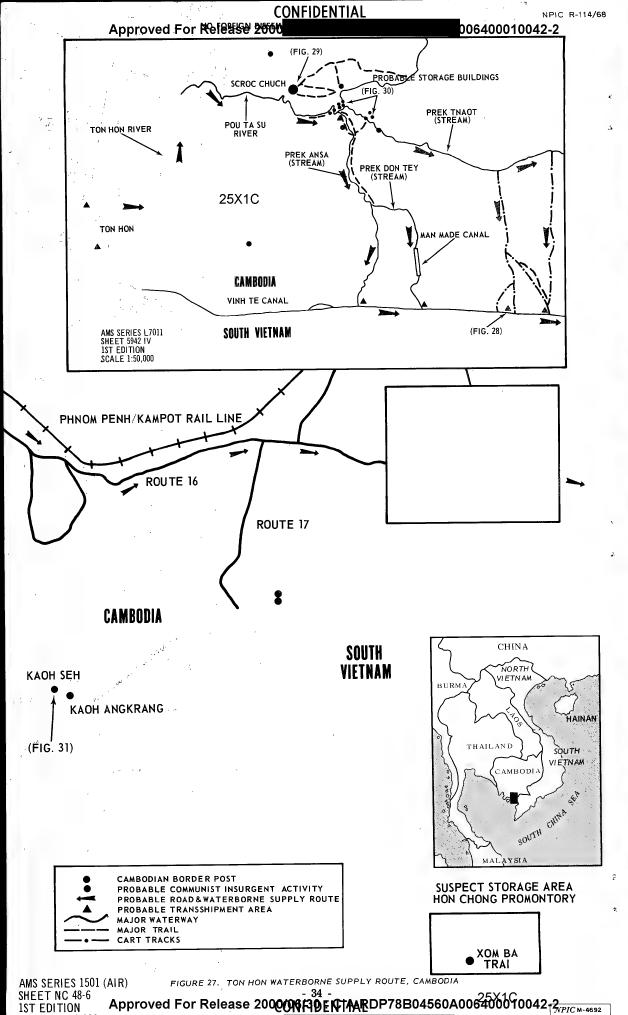
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SECTION V



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SECTION V

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Waterborne Supply Routes, Kampot Province and Gulf of Thailand

There is a strong probability that the road and waterborne supply route through southeastern Kampot Province is linked with supplies shipped to the port of Sihanoukville, then overland via Kampot, Ton Hon, and the Vinh Te Canal in nearby south Vietnam (Figures 27 and 28).

Analysis of photography through has revealed large motorized river craft (3- to 5-metric-ton capacity) navigating the Ton Hon and Pou Ta Su (rivers) between the villages of Ton Hon and Sroc Chuch (Figure 29), circumventing the western terminus of the Vinh Te Canal possibly to avoid detection by several South Vietnamese border facilities in the area. Several transshipment storage areas and encampments have been observed within this area (Figure 30). Smaller sampans have been observed on the Prek Ansa and Prek Tnaot (streams), which cross the South Vietnam border.

The east-west oriented Vinh Te Canal (extending 34 nm between the Ton Hon River and Chau Doc, South Vietnam) is the final link in this major waterborne artery that serves the Mekong Delta of South Vietnam. Four transshipment facilities have been identified along a 2.5-nm segment of this canal. Boat slips have been carved out of the canal banks in two of these areas to expedite the transloading process.

Another suspected waterborne logistics route exists between the Cambodian mainland 25X1B in the Sihanoukville-Ream area and the Hon Chong Promontory in South Vietnam. The suspected terminus could be several storage-type buildings and associated defense positions near the village of Xom Ba Trai.

Several possible storage areas have been observed on the islands of Kaoh Seh (Figure 31) and Kaoh Angkrang in the Gulf of Thailand. Each of these islands contains several partially concealed buildings, probably constructed during late , and a possible open storage area. A lack of supporting indigenous activity, including native agriculture and fishing, makes these islands highly desirable as storage depots in an intergrated waterborne supply route.



FIGURE 28. ONE OF FOUR TRANSSHIPMENT FACILITIES LOCATED ON THE VINH TE CANAL, CHAU DOC PROVINCE, SOUTH VIETNAM. Cart tracks extend north into Cambodia to the Prek Tnaot (River).

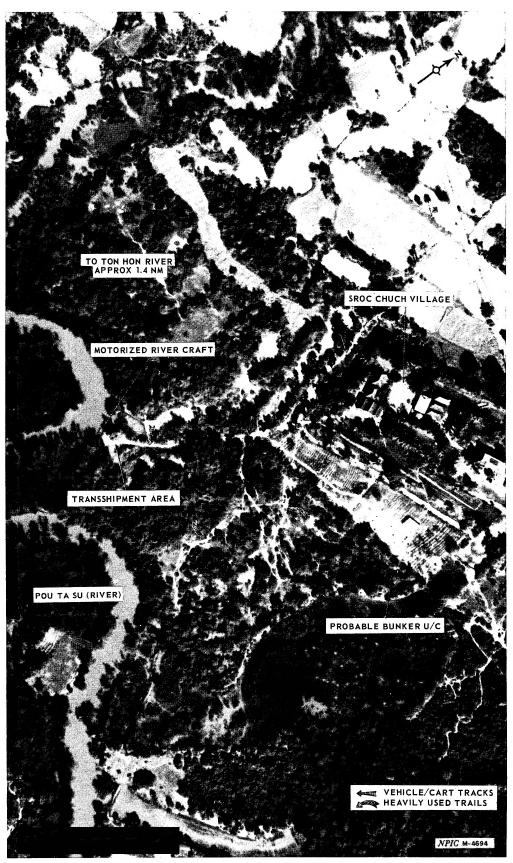


FIGURE 29. THE TERMINUS OF THE TON HON WATERBORNE LOGISTIC SEGMENT, SROC CHUCH, CAMBODIA. The semiburied bunkered storage facility under construction is identical to one detected under construction in Kratie Province near Base Area 351. - 36 -25X1D

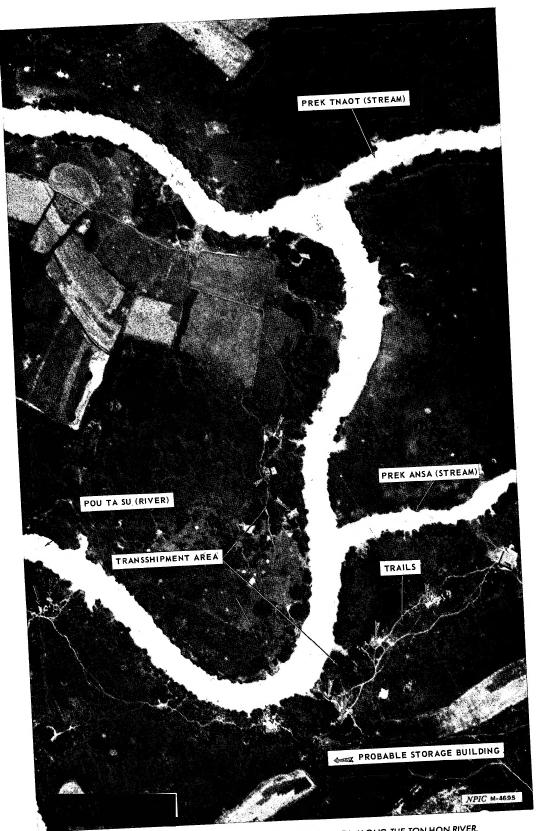


FIGURE 30. PROBABLE TRANSSHIPMENT AND STORAGE AREA ALONG THE TON HON RIVER.

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FIGURE 31. POSSIBLE STORAGE FACILITY, KAOH SEH (ISLAND), GULF OF THAILAND, CAMBODIA. 25X1D

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REFERENCES



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